

Friends of the Flint River Trail



"Riding together in Flint and Genesee County"

2013

Who are The Friends of the Flint River Trail?

The Friends of the Flint River Trail was started about 15 years ago – inspired by Stephany Diana – who got a few of us together to promote the much underused (at the time) Flint River Trail. The trail had been there since the mid-1970's but had fallen into complete disrepair. We started the Sunday rides to promote awareness and use of the trail. That first year, a dozen riders was a 'big crowd' – and the total ride was to Johnson School and back. We managed to get a small map of the trail published (thanks to MCC) and our first newsletter was published in 1999.

Our efforts have been to promote the use and maintenance of the trail, to promote safe cycling throughout our communities and to encourage expansion of the trail. We feel we have been largely successful on all three counts. We have had the Sunday rides every Sunday – May through October since our inception.

For years we were a loosely organized group with no official officers/by-laws or other typical aspects of organizations. Partly in order to secure some grant funding and for financial accounting, Friends of the Flint River Trail became a chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC). The FRWC is an environmental group that focuses on the Flint River and its 1400 square mile watershed. FRWC seeks to protect, preserve and improve the river. Its mission includes promotion of recreational opportunities on the river and to improve its image. Thus, the promotion of the bike rides (along with kayaking/paddling events) does wonders to improve the image of the Flint River as a recreational resource in Flint and also in Genesee and Lapeer Counties.

In our effort to promote cycling and trails, we added once a month Saturday rides. At first, it was difficult to even find six different trails within an hour's drive from Flint. Today, we have to pick and choose from several trails – and have thought about adding more than one ride per month because of trail expansion. We strongly encourage our riders to become members of the Flint River Watershed Coalition – which does so much to support us! You can find out more about the FRWC at their website, flintriver.org.

First Sunday Ride of 2013

Sunday, May 5th

2:00 pm • Flint Farmers' Market

First Saturday Ride

Saturday, May 18th

10:00 am • Southern Links Trail
Columbiaville

Subject to weather conditions, the first Sunday ride will be a pleasant, family friendly ride of about 10 miles - from the Market to Stepping Stone Falls and back - with a brief stop to view the falls.



Join Us as We Spruce Up the Bike Trail Saturday, April 27th • 9:00 am to 1:00pm Lunch Provided after the Cleanup

A lot of trash accumulates over a Michigan winter. The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) will have their annual Flint River Trail cleanup in preparation for the Sunday bike riding season. Volunteers are asked to meet at Veteran's Park on James P. Cole Blvd. (just south of Hamilton) prior to the cleanup to sign in, form groups, obtain garbage bags and receive cleanup instructions. Keep Genesee County Beautiful will provide the garbage bags, and the FFRT recommend you bring drinking water and work gloves.

We will be joined by volunteers from other groups and organizations, and many new and former volunteers. The trash collected by the volunteers will be picked up and taken away. After the cleanup, lunch will be provided at Veteran's Park.

Prior sign up is not required but if you or your group would like more information regarding the trail cleanup, please contact Linda at 810-695-7777 or 810-785-1046.

It's a chance to roll up your sleeves and make a difference in your community.



Saturday Rides on Nearby Trails

This year, on the **"THIRD SATURDAY"** of each month, the FFRT will lead rides on other mid-Michigan trails – usually within a one hour drive from Flint. The rides will start at the trail-head at 10:00 AM on the Saturday morning of the ride. Riders are responsible for their own transportation to the trail head – and, usually – we join for lunch following the ride; the lunch, of course, is completely optional. There are several trail options from which to choose, and the schedule is not set; but it will be available well ahead of time at the Sunday rides.

Our first ride, however, is firmly set for the Southern Links Trail starting at the Columbiaville Trail Head on Saturday, May 18th. The trail goes from Columbiaville to Otter Lake to Millington – about ten miles in length. The total ride is, therefore, about 20 miles – with an ice-cream stop in Millington and (optional) lunch at a nice little restaurant right next to the trail head in Columbiaville after the ride.

Rides will be scheduled on the third Saturday of each month May through October. Most of these rides are of 20 to 25 miles in length – but at a pleasant and leisurely pace. We always have a nice break



The Flint River Watershed Coalition is a membership organization that promotes citizen stewardship of our natural resources by providing our members with the sources, knowledge, and capacity necessary to protect local water quality and watershed habitat. Check out the programs for 2013 at flintriver.org.



Organized Rides Across the State

by Jack Minore

Each year across the state, there are organized rides: some are merely recreational and many are fund-raisers for various charities. Virtually all of them are announced in the annual ride calendar of the League of Michigan Bicyclists – and anyone can locate the calendar on their website, lmb.org.

Most of the organized rides have multiple options as to length and/or difficulty. Typically, there will be options of 20, 32, 40, 75 and up to 100 miles – but those options vary widely by ride. Most have entry fees – which often include T-shirts and/or other mementos. Some encourage or require pledges for the charity. Most rides have ‘rest stops’ every 12-15 miles for porta-potties, fresh water, fruit, cookies, bananas, etc. Most are ‘ride at your own speed’ and are NOT races.

Anyone wishing to try one for the first time should be comfortable with the shorter routes – and they are often in great scenic ‘tourist’ spots. They are also a good way to support a cause – such as research for cures for diseases or to raise money for a museum, for example. The LMB calendar has all the necessary information for any given ride – arranged by date throughout the entire year.

Introducing the Inaugural HealthPlus Tour de Crim! Saturday, May 11th, 11am-3pm



Ever wanted to check out the Crim’s famous 10-mile blue line course by bike? Well here’s your chance! The Crim Fitness Foundation is happy to introduce HealthPlus Tour de Crim. This family-friendly bicycle fun-ride will take place 11am-3pm on Saturday, May 11th. HealthPlus Tour de Crim is a non-competitive bicycle fun-ride along the Crim Festival of Races’ famous 10-mile blue line course.

There will be four stops during the ride where bicyclists will have the option to go through fun and challenging obstacles of varying difficulty. In addition to the fun-ride, adult participants will have a chance to enjoy flavorful beers from Michigan microbreweries. Children will learn about and practice bicycle safety during a bicycle rodeo and helmet fitting.

Participants will be encouraged to enter bicycle related contests such as *Most Classic Bike*, *Most Decorated Bike*, *Most Creative Costume*, *Most Creative Team*, etc. Register today and save with early registration specials and combos at www.tourdecrim.org.

FFRT is an official chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC).

The FRWC has included us on their website at flintriver.org.

Find us on the lower right hand side of the website under Chapters.

Also find us on Facebook.



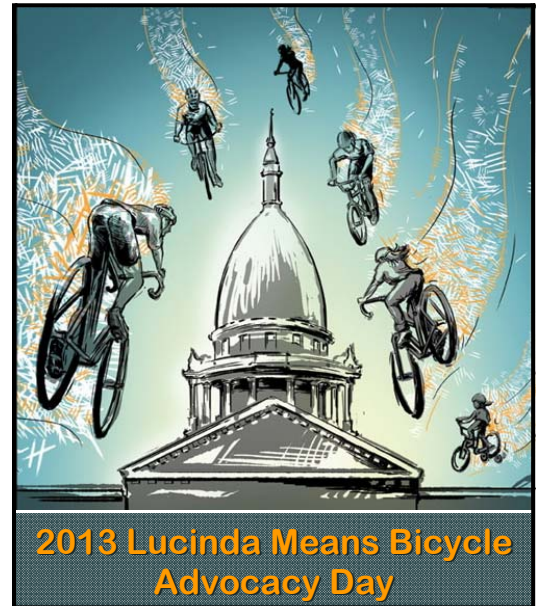
Bicycle Advocacy Day – May 22nd

Want to see more bike trails? More bike lanes on the roadways? Better safety rules for motorists who don't like bikes on the road?

Join other cycling advocates for the annual Lucinda Means Legislative Day – this year it's Wednesday, May 22 -- on the grounds of the State Capitol in Lansing.

Sponsored by the League of Michigan Bicyclists, the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, the Michigan Mountain Biking Association and – sometimes – a few other organizations, the day starts with a briefing in a big tent on the Capitol lawn and is then followed by visits to legislators on specific key issues related to bicycling.

Many people will begin the day on the MSU campus followed by a bike ride to the Capitol. Others simply join up at the State Capitol. More details are available at lmb.org and will be provided at our Sunday rides.



Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance

By Jack Minore

Readers have all probably heard of “Rails to Trails” – a national organization. When they consolidated and went from state chapters to a national organization with regional offices covering several states, Michigan – with R to T approval, formed Michigan Trails and Greenways (MTGA). It advocates for and assists locals with land acquisition, funding, and in many other ways. MTGA also promotes bicycle lanes and other cycling efforts.

You may have seen the state trails map/directory that MTGA publishes every year – and which we usually have available at our Sunday rides.

MTGA has been very successful, and our state now has more miles of multi-use trails than any other state in the union. We promote multi-use trails – for cycling, snowmobiles, jogging, walking etc. The trail directory is available online, as is the membership form, at michigantrails.org. I'm pleased to be a member of the Board of MTGA, and would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the organization.

Join us every Sunday at 2:00pm beginning at the Flint Farmers' Market.
Rides are scheduled from May through the end of October.
Hope to see YOU there!



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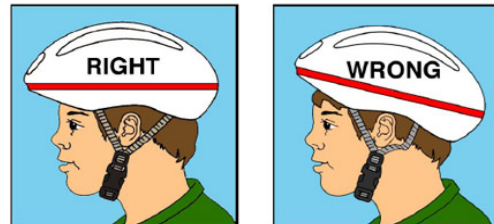
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The Friends of the Flint River Trail Statement of Purpose

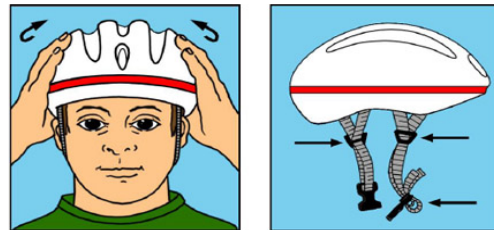
We promote:

- Greater use of the trail through improved safety, maintenance, and publicity;
- Healthy lifestyles by promoting bicycling to new and existing cyclists as transportation and recreation;
- Improved facilities along the trail;
- Extension of the trail's length and movement toward a city/county trail system.

We are strong proponents of bicycle helmets!



Wear the helmet flat on the head, not tilted back at an angle!



Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct the field of vision. Make sure the chin strap fits securely and that the buckle stays fastened.

Ride of Silence - Wednesday, May 15, 2013



On Wednesday, May 15th, The Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) will join cyclists around the world in what has become an annual event, the "Ride of Silence" (ROS). The ROS commemorates all who have been injured or killed in bicycle/motor vehicle accidents over the past years.

This year's Flint ride will start at 6:55 promptly from the Flint Farmers' Market on E. Boulevard Drive – just off Longway. We will assemble on the Flint River Trail to begin a ride of about 10 miles – including through downtown. Because we wind through some neighborhoods and there are lots of street crossings and traffic lights – it is a slower ride than many are used to and we often stop for those not 'making the light' to catch up. Some riders have expressed concern about the frequent stops – but safety is our first concern – and the stops are critical in view of the approaching dusk.

Jack Minore will be leading the Flint ride. Questions may be addressed to him at jacksonmin@aol.com.

River Ride

Friends of the Flint River Trail
c/o Flint River Watershed Coalition
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Flint, Michigan 48502

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Friends of the Flint River Trail

check our event calendar
for updated ride information



Friends of the Flint River Trail Sunday Bicycle Rides



FFRT leads rides every Sunday at 2:00pm, starting at the Flint Farmers' Market from May through October. There will be several standard rides:

- to Blue Bell Beach (about 12.5 miles round trip)
- through the UM/Flint and Mott campuses to Stepping Stone Falls (also about 12.5 miles)
- to the village of Genesee for Ice Cream (about 17 miles round trip)
- and to Atwood Stadium and Kettering to Ballenger Highway and back (distance depends on additions on the way back).

We also do at least one ride partly on city streets to For-Mar Nature Preserve, and possibly some rides through the East Court residential streets.

We have shorter rides for new riders and those with small children who would prefer a less strenuous ride during May. Riders will be divided into manageable sized groups to make street crossing easier and safer.

We have sweeps to assist with bike problems like flat tires and chain adjustments. We ask that riders come with their bikes in good condition and tires pumped up, although we will have pumps at the market for those who might need air. It is good idea to take your bikes to a local bike shop for an annual tune up to make sure they are safe and working well.

We strongly encourage HELMETS. It is much safer.